



Mental Health and Disability Services Redesign 2011

Advocate & Consumer Recommendations

The Department of Human Services has made a concerted effort to include families, advocates and consumers in the Mental Health Redesign Process. We believe that the consumers and advocates are at the core of this process, and after attending three public meetings six themes have emerged among the many pertinent comments and suggestions.

- **Need for Jail Diversion Programs:** Concerns about clients with disabilities ending up in jail due to symptoms and behaviors related to their mental health or disability have been heard. It further has been expressed that jail or the correctional institutions are not the appropriate setting for these individuals to receive the support needed. Crisis stabilization services will also be essential.
- **Individualized Treatment:** It is recognized that clients have unique and individualized needs. It has been requested that services broadly meet individual needs rather than a set of services being prescribed or made available due to a diagnosis.
- **Peer Support Services:** There is a growing recognition of value of peer support. It has been expressed that peer support be included in core services particularly around crisis intervention and treatment support.
- **Housing/Workforce:** Vulnerable groups lack safe, affordable housing and viable employment. This negatively impacts treatment efforts and progress. It has been recommended to provide housing and employment options for all groups.
- **Adequately Funding Services:** Funding is a critical issue and one that is shared by all. The legislature will make final appropriations; however, your advocacy helps in setting priorities.
- **Transition:** Attention has been brought to assure consideration of what would happen to individuals when transitioning from a County System to a Regional System.

This feedback has been shared with the six workgroups, designated by Senate File 525, and they are working on integrating, where appropriate, these themes into the final recommendations that will be presented to the Legislative Interim Committee at the end of October. (A list of all workgroup and legislative members can be found at this link:

http://www.dhs.state.ia.us/docs/RedesignWkGrpParticipant%20List_08-11-11bj_rev09-09-11rt_rev09-21-11rt.pdf)

If you have additional input that you feel is critical to consider in the redesign process, please email your comments to: DHS-MHSRedesign@dhs.state.ia.us.

If you would like to learn more about each of these recommendations, plus others the workgroups are addressing, you can access all the resources, handouts, minutes, and agendas for the six MHDS Redesign Workgroups at this website:

<http://www.dhs.state.ia.us/Partners/MHDSRedesign.html>.